

FROM THE STUDY OF THE RABBI

TEMPLE B'NAI ABRAHAM OF ESSEX COUNTY

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NEWARK, N.J., July 26 -- Rabbi Jonathan J. Prinz of Temple B'nai Abraham and a founder and three term Vice President of the United Community Corporation, Newark's Anti-Poverty Agency issued the following statement today:

"It is both in bad taste and inconsistent with fact for the Mayor of Newark to take broadsides at the United Community Corporation for playing a role in starting the tragic riots of two weeks ago. The continued use of community action as the whipping boy of politicians is something that must be exposed and must end.

"It is shocking that those who, in complete disregard of a great deal of public sentiment, are planning to tear down at least another 50 acres of Central Ward property for a medical school and who could not accept the appointment of a Negro to a major Board of Education post, should now be pointing an accusing finger at others for stirring up dissension.

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"Why not point to a lack of creativity on the part of the Mayor and city officials as a cause for the frustration that exists in the Ghetto? It is no wonder that people are disturbed about the bulldozing of dwellings when so much land already lies completely leveled and vacant in widespread areas of the ward.

"According to the Model Cities Program submitted by the Mayor, 4,000 dwelling units are projected for demolition in that same area of the community with only 1,000 replacements for poor people. The balance will go for middle and upper income housing.

"One would think that Mayor Addonizio would now be taking the initiative in uniting a badly divided city and comforting its frightened inhabitants rather than using this opportunity to shift the blame onto other shoulders. One might expect that the Mayor would be presenting creative plans for the elimination of tension, that long vacant lots in the Central Ward would be blacktopped as temporary playgrounds, and that meetings would be held to iron out the differences between feuding factions.

"The time has come to end politicking. The Mayor ought to understand that at this juncture his role must be that of a statesman, not a namecaller. The causes of riots are complex. A high level study may bring to the fore the set of events and circumstances that brought about the disturbances in Newark. The role of all now should be to set the tone which will permit the city to accept the

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findings of such a study and to move forward toward not merely peace but progress with the elimination of the real frustrations that exist in the Ghetto."

Rabbi Prinz, who in the Spring announced that he would be leaving his post at Temple B'nai Abraham in Newark this September, is a resident of the city. He was one of fifteen incorporators of the CAP, and played a central role in its development. For the last half year he has also served as chairman of the Anti-Poverty Commission of the Citizens Committee for Metropolitan Affairs, Inc., an independent volunteer citizens group that has acted as a kind of unofficial Umbudsman in areas concerning poverty, consumer services, and drugs.

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